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Date: JUL 11 1965

STATINTL

# LBJ's New Offices in Austin Are Imposing, But Not Lavish

Special to The Light  
AUSTIN — That \$10 million marble palace with fireplace big enough for 10-foot logs the

zens for Goldwater and Miller complained about last fall was thrown partly open for inspection by newsmen Saturday.

It is, of course, the Texas office of President Johnson on the top floor of the new \$7,500,000 Federal Building complex here.

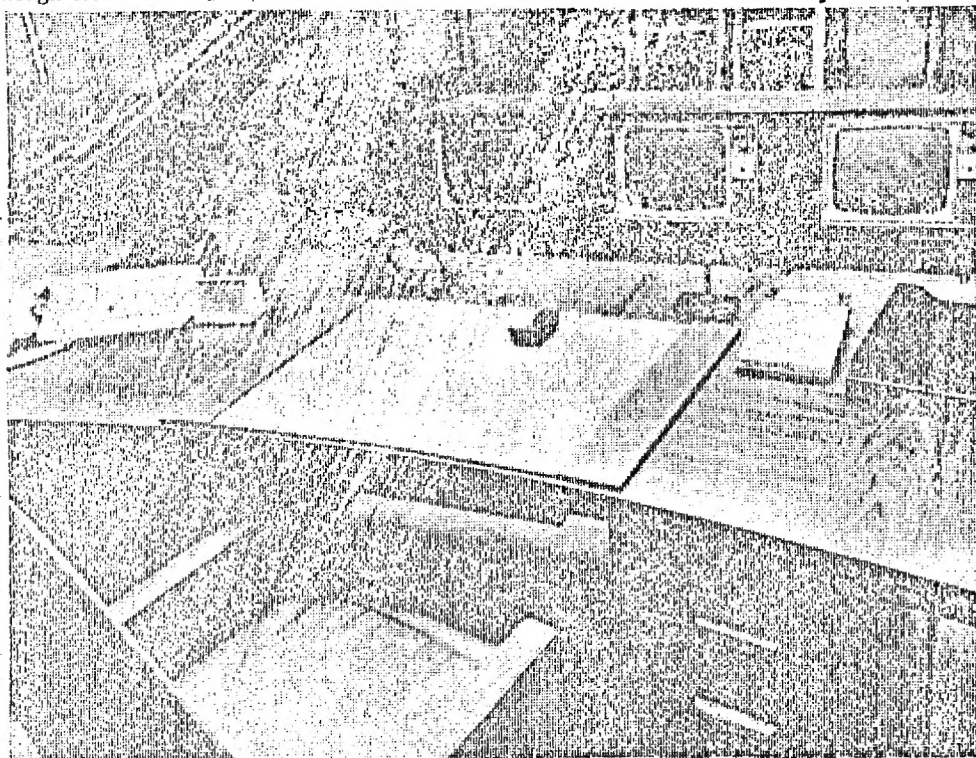
It's neat, roomy and imposing but it isn't what could really be called lavish. The only marble was in the executive bathroom, and there was not much of it there.

## MODERN APARTMENT

Furnishings are of the modern type about like you'd find in a \$700-a-month furnished apartment. The difference is in the electronics, the security and the beautiful wood work done by members of Carpenters Local 1266.

The executive suite which covers a 77x100 foot half of the ninth floor of the building is bristling with both wiring and security. Every room has two or three of those white multi-line telephones. Muzak with four channels to choose from is wired into every room, and even the elevator lobby. In front of the presidential desk is a battery of three TV sets with a remote control gadget on the desk, so all three networks can be watched at the same time. The sitting room with the fireplace has a console TV-radio-record player, also with remote control.

Every door leading to the outside hall has two locks. And the other federal agencies on the ninth floor are of a nature that their personnel will not have to have further security checks before becoming presidential neighbors. Other offices are occupied by investigators for the Civil Service Commission, the FBI, the Office of Civil Defense, the Secret Service, the 112th Intelligence Corps Group of the U.S. Army, and a man whose name is given on the lobby directory only as William B. Wood. He's the Southwest personnel representative for the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency).



PRESIDENT JOHNSON will have this view when he is seated in his newly completed office in Austin's new Fed-

eral Building. This was the first visit newsmen have been allowed at the new offices.

**FOUR-FEET LONG**

As was reported in The Light in October when the charges about 10-foot logs in the fireplace were made by the Citizens for Goldwater and Miller, the fireplace extends into the sitting room, with a copper hood overhead. It has hearths on three sides, and you could put in a 20-foot log if you like. But the firebox is only about four feet long.

The presidential office on the northwest corner overlooks the Johnson family's TV and radio building four blocks away, and the LBJ penthouse apartment atop it, in case the President wants to get a signal that it's time to come home to supper.

The office is 22x35 feet, with a sofa and chairs at one end and huge windows on two sides.

Newsmen, and even newswomen, had a hard time describing the carpet colors. Green, chartreuse and gold were the guesses, but it is not quite any of those. Walnut block parquet floors are uncarpeted in the entrance hall between a reception and waiting room and the main secretarial office. Between this office and the President's office is a small washroom.

Running along the north side of the suite are three secretarial offices, a typists' workroom, and a 22x30 foot pressroom, already equipped with a \$4,000 copying machine to turn out the press statements. The press room could not begin to hold the White House press corps which accompanies Johnson to Texas.

**NO LBJ VISITS**

Horace Busby and Marvin Watson, White House assistants, said they did not know when the suite will be used. The President has not visited it since an early construction stage. Mrs. Johnson has been there several times, however.

Watson was busy Saturday getting office supplies and equipment into the suite. One portion of the suite was not opened to newsmen. This wing includes a communications center of the Army Signal Corps, and a large meeting or dining room, a small "galley" or warming kitchen is also in this portion of the suite, in case the President decides to ask visitors to stay for dinner.

When Johnson became President, construction had just started,

so the suite was expanded to 13 rooms to provide more secretarial space, the big meeting room and space for the press and Secret Service.

**NO TEAKWOOD**

As for the teakwood trim the Republicans said was being used, newsmen got varying answers, but most of the paneling appeared to be oak, with some walnut ceiling work. If the darker-colored doors were teak or mahogany, it was merely veneer, and not solid.

No estimate was available from General Services Administration officials present as to the cost of the presidential suite alone. Original construction contract was for \$7.3 million for the entire federal building and post office complex. The last estimate of total cost was "less than \$8 million."

The Austin firm of Brooks and Barr were the architects for the job. Max Brooks of that firm has handled most of the Johnson family work. The firm recently got the contract for the new U.S. Labor Department building in Washington.